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Russia-Ukraine: the week in brief | 22–29 November 2026

New EU sanctions, no date for the next Abu Dhabi round, and a Russian corvette sunk in Libya

The Editors

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Key points

- The European Commission proposed a 22nd sanctions package, and EU leaders deferred to December a decision on an additional loan to Ukraine for 2027.
- The Kremlin said no date is set for the next trilateral round in Abu Dhabi and questioned what European participation would add.
- Ukraine claimed the sinking of the Russian corvette Merkury in Benghazi, and Moscow accused Kiev of seeking a direct clash between Russia and NATO.

- Kiev submitted a Black Sea ceasefire proposal a day after accusing Russia of striking two grain carriers off Odessa; according to Kiev, Moscow wants oil exports included.
- Ukrainian drones targeted Russian refineries and the St Petersburg area, while Russia struck Ukraine's power grid and Ukraine stopped exporting electricity.

Economy, energy, sanctions

The European Commission presented a proposed 22nd sanctions package on 23 November. It would extend the transaction ban to some 60 Russian banks and crypto platforms, extend the energy services ban to refineries, bar all tankers insured in Russia, list more than 70 vessels that Brussels describes as part of Russia's "shadow fleet" and target third countries that help Russia evade sanctions. "We will continue to propose new sanctions until Russia shows genuine intent for a lasting peace in Ukraine," Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said. Member states have yet to adopt the package.

At a special European Council on 26 November, 24 member states backed the Commission's proposal for an additional loan to Ukraine of up to €45 billion for 2027. Bulgaria will take part only in the non-military component, and leaders will return to the issue in December. The summit ended without agreement on the EU's 2028–2034 budget. "We didn't reach an agreement," European Council President António Costa said.

In Kiev, the government approved on 27 November a revised 2027 budget for its second reading in parliament, with nearly UAH 5 trillion (about €100 billion) for security and defence. Prime Minister Sergey Koretsky said that even with all confirmed programmes, €70 billion of needs remain unfunded. TASS calculated from Ukrainian Finance Ministry data that Western financial support to Ukraine reached $69.9 billion in January–November, excluding weapons, of which $43.5 billion came from the EU.

In Russia, Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak spoke on 25 November about the domestic fuel market. "The situation is now quite tense because a number of refineries are under repair," he told journalists, according to TASS. He said a decision on the gasoline export ban, in force until 31 January 2027, would be taken in December depending on the forecast balance of supply and demand on the domestic market. Russia extended its jet fuel export ban to the end of March, bne IntelliNews reported.

Russian seaborne crude exports averaged 3.92 million barrels a day in the four weeks to 22 November, according to Bloomberg tanker data, 30,000 b/d less than in the previous period. The year-to-date average of 3.65 million b/d is the highest since 2022. The four-week gross value fell to $2.27 billion a week as Urals prices dropped by about $8 a barrel. Vortexa data cited by Reuters put seaborne shipments of Russian oil to China and India at 3.4 million b/d this year to mid-November, about 530,000 b/d more than a year earlier.

Ukraine stopped exporting electricity on 22 November, according to Ukraine's Centre for Economic Strategy, quoted by TASS, while imports rose to their highest level since mid-June. On 28 November Ukrenergo applied hourly outage schedules to all consumer categories and reported emergency cuts in the Zaporozhye and Dnepropetrovsk regions.

At sea, Koretsky said Russia struck two foreign bulk carriers loaded with more than 100,000 tonnes of grain near Odessa on the night of 25–26 November. Russia's Defence Ministry said it hit a dry cargo ship south-east of Odessa carrying military equipment and dual-use goods.

Diplomacy and negotiations

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on 24 November that no date has been set for the next trilateral round in Abu Dhabi, which last met on 10–11 November. "No, no dates have been set yet. There is an understanding that these talks must continue," he told TASS. He said the Europeans insist on a four-party format and that Moscow does not yet see what value their participation would add, Kommersant reported. Zelensky said Kiev was ready for a four-party meeting.

US envoy Jared Kushner said on 26 November that Putin "has agreed not to use nuclear weapons" and that the talks had reached "a little bit of a deadlock" over territory. President Donald Trump wrote the same day that he wanted Putin to "pull back all Military aggression against territories throughout Europe, in the hopes that a Deal can be made between Russia and Ukraine, and made quickly."

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on 26 November that Washington is conducting the dialogue on Ukraine "with the understanding that it is necessary to address its root causes," according to Sputnik. "We are open to dialogue with everyone, but this dialogue must be between decent people," he said, as quoted by TASS.

On 27 November Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha said Kiev had passed a Black Sea ceasefire proposal through India, Turkey and Egypt. "We are ready for a truce ... Now we are waiting for a response from Russia," he said. According to Sybiha, Moscow wants the truce to cover oil exports, which Kiev would discuss only as part of a broader energy ceasefire. No Russian response had been reported by Sunday morning.

On 23 November Russia's Foreign Ministry summoned Estonia's chargé d'affaires, Marek Juhtegi, over Tallinn's decision to close border crossings from 1 December and its accusation of a Russian sabotage attempt near Tallinn. The ministry accused Estonia of letting Ukrainian drones use its airspace and said such actions were "on the brink of unleashing an open war with Russia." Estonia denies the airspace accusation.

Kyrylo Budanov, head of the Ukrainian presidential office, said on 25 November that the first stage of the prisoner exchange agreed in Abu Dhabi could take place in late November or early December and involve about 1,000 captives. No exchange had taken place by Sunday morning. On 28 November Melania Trump said she remained committed to "reuniting families," after Russia's children's rights commissioner Maria Lvova-Belova thanked her on 25 November.

Military situation

Ukraine claimed the sinking of the Russian corvette Merkury at the naval base of Benghazi, Libya, on 22 November. Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on 26 November that Zelensky "is deliberately trying to provoke a direct clash between Russia and NATO countries."

Ukrainian drones kept targeting Russian energy sites, including the Novoshakhtinsk refinery in the Rostov region, where governor Yuri Slyusar confirmed an attack without naming the facilities. Pulkovo airport in St Petersburg suspended flights on 27 November, and the following night Moscow Mayor Sergey Sobyanin reported drones heading for the capital.

Russia's Defence Ministry said its strikes during the week hit Ukrainian defence plants as well as energy and transport sites. Zelensky said on 26 November that Moscow was "completing preparations for a new massive strike" on the power grid. The Zaporozhye nuclear power plant lost its last external power line on 25 November, the IAEA said; the agency is negotiating a local ceasefire to allow repairs.

On the front line, Russia's Defence Ministry reported that Russian forces took control of Sosnovy Bor in the Kharkov region and Barvinovka near Gulyaipole. Control of Kupyansk-Uzlovoy remained contested, with each side publishing footage asserting its own control.

This briefing was drafted with the help of artificial intelligence from public sources, then reviewed and approved by the Forum Geopolitica editorial team

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